TAKE THOUGHT FOR THE MORROW. See page 20.


# JOHN BULL

Vol. XVIII No. 456 | SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 1915 | ONE PENNY

[Registered at the G.P.O. as a Newspaper.]


945886

For meaning of this No. see page 26.

Come the three corners of the world in arms,
And we shall shock them: nought shall make us rue,
If *Britain* to itself do rest but true.

Edited by
HORATIO BOTTOMLEY.

*Largest Circulation of any Weekly Journal in the World.*

**OUR STUPENDOUS FREE INSURANCE** (See Page 20.) If you desire to avoid the necessity of filling up this weekly coupon you may sign the Newsagent's Order Form on page 20, and forward the duplicate to us and you will be *permanently insured* during such period as this Insurance scheme remains in force.

**SPECIAL NOTE.**—If you do not make use of the Newsagent's Form on page 20 fill in this form and carefully retain it. In the event of a claim it must be forwarded to the Editor of "John Bull" within seven days of the date of the accident.

# GREAT WAR INSURANCE COUPON.

**(Insuring against ALL War Risks, as specified on page 20.)**

*Name of Insured*..... *Address*.....

*Age next Birthday*.....

## NOMINATION FORM.

**In the event of my being injured or killed on land within the British Isles, or of my home or its contents being damaged, I hereby nominate first myself, or in the event of my Death:—**

*Name*..... *Address*.....

**to receive such sum as may become payable under the terms of the Insurance Scheme set out in "JOHN BULL."**

*This coupon must be signed by the Insured—or, in the case of children under twelve years of age, by their parents or legal guardians—and is available for London and twelve-mile radius till 8 a.m. Wednesday, March 3 and all other parts of the British Isles till 8 a.m. Thursday, March 4.*


# OLD CALABAR

**"RABALAC"**

**is the ideal food and body builder (spell it backwards). The name implies the quality.**

**Booklet and Samples of all foods for Dogs or Poultry sent free by the Old Calabar Biscuit Co., Liverpool, Eng.**


## JOHN BULL PEN COUPON. Value 1d.

By sending this Coupon with P.O. for 2/6 and loose 1d. stamp for postage, the holder is entitled to receive a John Bull Gold Nibbed Fountain Pen. Additional Coupons up to 12 from "John Bull" or "Mary Bull," any dates, may be saved and used in part payment, each counting as 1d. off the price. You may send 13 Coupons, and P.O. for 1/6 only and loose 1d. stamp for postage. Address Pen Dept., "John Bull" Long Acre, London, W.C. February 27 1915.

*N.B.—State whether you prefer a Fine, Medium, or Broad Nib.*


# CLEMAK Safety Razor 5/-

**17, BILLITER STREET, LONDON, E.C.**


## FIRST READ THIS.

If you predict the "Home" Team will win, put in ink a X in the Home Column; if you predict the "Away" Team will win, put a X in the Away Column. For Draws put a X in the Draw Column.

# John Bull ENTRANCE FORM.

**Matches to be played Saturday, Mar. 13th.**

| AWAY. | DRAW. | HOME TEAM. | | AWAY TEAM. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Sheffield U. | v. | Manchester C. |
| | | Aston Villa | v. | Middlesbro' |
| | | Liverpool | v. | Newcastle U. |
| | | Bradford | v. | Tottenham H. |
| | | Oldham A. | v. | Burnley |
| | | Manchester U. | v. | Bradford City |
| | | Bolton Wanderers | v. | Chelsea |
| | | Notts. C. | v. | West Bromwich A. |
| | | Sunderland | v. | Sheffield W. |
| | | Blackburn R. | v. | Everton |
| | | Glossop | v. | Leicester F. |
| | | Fulham | v. | Preston N.E. |
| | | Stockport C. | v. | Bury |
| | | Hull City | v. | Bristol City |
| | | Arsenal | v. | Birmingham |
| | | Portsmouth | v. | Crystal Palace |
| | | Southend U. | v. | Exeter City |
| | | Queen's Park R. | v. | Cardiff City |
| | | Millwall A. | v. | Brighton & Hove |
| | | Croydon Common | v. | Norwich City |

I enter "JOHN BULL" Football Competition in accordance with the rules announced on this page, and agree to accept the Editor's published decision as final and legally binding, and enter on that understanding.

.....

**17** *Address* .....

.....

**Entrance Forms must be cut, not torn out.**

# Read Rules Carefully.

## NOTE METHOD OF MARKING COUPON.

1. We have adopted the following rule for marking the Entrance Form:—If you predict the Home Team will win, put a X in the Home Column; if you give the Away Team to win, put a X in the Away Column. For a Draw put a X in the Draw Column.

2. Having done this, write in ink (typewriting or pencilling will not do), your name and address in the space provided, cut out the Entrance Form, and address it to **"John Bull," 25, Floral Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C.,** mark envelope in top left-hand corner, **Football Contest No. 17,** and send to reach us not later than **Friday, March 12th.**

3. The sum of £1,500 will be paid to the Competitor whose entrance form contains the correct results, as published in the "Sporting Life," of all the matches given played to a finish on Saturday, Mar. 13th. Should it happen that no entrance form be received giving the whole of the correct results, a cash prize of £250 will be paid to the sender of a coupon with one error only. In the unlikely event of neither the £1,500 nor the £250 being won, £100 will be paid to the competitor sending in the most correct forecasts whatever the number; and £25 to the sender of the most correct forecasts on a mauve coupon taken from "Mary Bull." If the sender of a mauve coupon should win or share the £1,500, the £250, or the £100, the "Mary Bull" prize will be awarded to the sender of the next most correct forecasts on a mauve coupon.

4. No responsibility will be accepted by the Editor for the loss or non-delivery of any effort. No correspondence will be entered into, neither interviews be granted.

5. Any effort on which any alteration has been made will be disqualified.

6. In the event of a tie or ties in this Competition, the £1,500, the £250 and £100, as well as the special £25 mauve coupon prize, will be equally divided.

7. Our employees are strictly debarred from entering this contest.

8. Scottish readers may enter.

**CONTEST CLOSES FRIDAY, MARCH 12th.**

## DUPLICATE COUPON.

**The following duplicate list of the matches is printed solely for the convenience of Competitors desirous of keeping a record of their efforts. It must on no account be sent in, and will not be accepted as proof of forecasts made on the Entrance Form.**

| H | A | D | TEAMS. | H | A | D | TEAMS. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Sheffield U. v. Manchester C. | | | | Glossop v. Leicester F. |
| | | | Aston Villa v. Middlesbrough | | | | Fulham v. Preston N.E. |
| | | | Liverpool v. Newcastle U. | | | | Stockport C. v. Bury |
| | | | Bradford v. Tottenham H. | | | | Hull City v. Bristol C. |
| | | | Oldham A. v. Burnley | | | | Arsenal v. Birmingh. |
| | | | Manchester U. v. Bradford City | | | | Portsmouth v. Crystal |
| | | | Bolton Wand. v. Chelsea | | | | Southend U. v. Exet. |
| | | | Notts C. v. West Bromwich A. | | | | Queen's Park R. v. |
| | | | Sunderland v. Sheffield W. | | | | Millwall A. v. Brigh. |
| | | | Blackburn R. v. Everton | | | | Croydon Common v. |

# JOHN BULL.

*Politics without Party—Criticism without Cant:*
*Without Fear or Favour, Rancour or Rant.*

Vol. XVIII. No. 456. Week ending Saturday, February 27th, 1915. One Penny.

## *IMPORTANT NOTICE.*

*Letters must be addressed to the Editor or the Publisher, according to whether they relate to Editorial or Business matters. All communications should be* addressed to 93, LONG ACRE, LONDON, W.C.

*All remittances, applications for advertising space, subscriptions, orders, etc., should be addressed to Odhams, Limited, 93 and 94, Long Acre, London, W.C.*

## *£10 REWARD.*

***WANTED, the Copy of "JOHN BULL" for February 20th, 1915, bearing on its Cover the Number 398,208.***

***Any person possessing this copy should apply to THE MANAGER, "JOHN BULL," 93, LONG ACRE, LONDON, W.C.***

The copy of JOHN BULL dated January 16th, and bearing the number 798112, in respect of which £10 reward had been offered, has been forwarded to us by Mr. G. Garner, of 44, Terrace Road, Aberystwyth, to whom a cheque has accordingly been sent.

## THE WORLD, THE FLESH, AND THE DEVIL.

*[The Editor discourses upon passing events and topics of the day.]*

**Still Busy.**

We regret that it is impracticable for us to comply with all the requests we receive to attend recruiting meetings in various parts of the country. Our hands are very full at the moment; still, we manage to work a bit in. On Thursday of the present week, for instance, we are at Battersea—and on Saturday evening we are forgoing our much-needed week-end rest to speak twice at the *Hackney* Empire. And we are endeavouring to organise a somewhat extended provincial campaign. Meanwhile, what *is* the Parliamentary Recruiting Committee doing? Is it tired?

**"Still a Party."**

Is it true that these were the words used by Lord Haldane in "turning down" a recent deputation on the Aniline Dye question? And what was Lord Haldane doing in that galley, anyhow?

**The Dying *Citizen*.**

The *Citizen* is *in extremis*, and will soon be no more—another monument to Ramsay's reign! Perhaps when the war is over we may have a Labour daily worthy of its mission. Any scheme with such an object will certainly receive our hearty support.

**A Visit to Hackney.**

We paid a flying visit to South Hackney the other night, to give a hand at a great recruiting rally on behalf of the Footballers' Battalion—convened under the auspices of the Clapton Orient Club. Unfortunately both the sitting member, Mr. Hector Morison, and the "prospective Unionist candidate," Mr. J. C. Gibson, were prevented from attending owing in each case, by a strange coincidence, to a "bad cold"—a remarkable tribute to the reality and completeness of the Party truce! But it is very trying weather—and they must both wrap up well. A by-election just now would be most inconvenient!

**The Jumping Feline.**

But stay. *Is* the truce quite so genuine, after all? Whilst in the division, we were shown a circular which has just been issued by the "South Hackney Liberal, Radical and Progressive Association," in which the members are warned that "though debarred from propaganda work," they should "keep in close touch with their ward officers and with the central office"—and *why*, think you? Listen. "As regards forthcoming elections—Parliamentary, *County Council, Municipal, Guardians*—no one knows what the position will be, say, at the end of this year, *and we must be careful not to be caught unawares.*" How utterly the Party mind fails to comprehend the new spirit of the age! The cat *will* jump out of the bag. But does Mr. Lloyd George know that his photograph and name adorn this document?

**Political Biography of Mr. Walter Rea.**

1906, returned Member for Scarborough. 1909, voted with Little Navyites against the proposal to build four extra *Dreadnoughts*. 1914. Scarborough bombarded by the Huns. 1915: Appointed a Lord Commissioner of the Treasury. Thus is virtue rewarded!

**President and King.**

Nothing more remarkable has been published in connection with the war than the letters which passed between the President of the French Republic and the King on the very eve of hostilities. There is a mystery about the present publication which will, doubtless, be investigated in Parliament during the week. At any rate, we hope so—for, with or without official enlightenment, we shall certainly have something to say on the subject in our next issue.

**Our "Second Battle Cry."**

The full report of our Albert Hall speech is nearly out of print, large quantities having been sent to the Front by friends and relatives of our fighting lads—God bless them!

**First Love.**

The old saying that we always return to our first love is exemplified in the fact that Mr. John Burns now spends all his time at the L. G. B. He should never have left it.

**Another grand prize of £250 offered by "Bullets."**

**Work or the Sack.**

"Burr," of Canonbury, tells us he was one of a Trade Union deputation who waited on the M.P. for South Islington to press him to urge upon the Government the necessity for immediate action to obtain control of and regulate the food supplies of Great Britain. There after he entered the Sacred Chamber "to listen to a debate on that vital subject." There were then 14 members on both side of the House, including three occupants of the Treasury Bench, and during his two hours' stay the members present at any one time did not exceed 25. The Front Bench dwindled to one, the Opposition Bench being occupied by nobody at all. "These men are well paid," says "Burr." "What is the objection to the House being conducted on the same principle as other large business concerns, the employees having to attend during stipulated hours on pain of the sack if they do not keep time, or neglect the duties entrusted to them?" There is no objection at all. When we constitute our Business Government we shall probably put all the members on piece work.

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**Fourteen Days for a Patriot.**

Another scandalous sentence! John Edward Hollins is an old soldier who has served in the Boer War, who has two sons at the Front, and "who felt that when the country needed men he ought to go." He therefore offered himself for enlistment, but was rejected as medically unfit. This notwithstanding, he tried again for another branch of military service, and then made a false attestation that he had not been so rejected. For this offence he was hauled up at Salford, and, despite the fact that the Commanding Officer of the battalion gave evidence that Hollins was a good and well-behaved soldier, a stupendous Stipendiary at Salford sent him to gaol for fourteen days! Whether this sentence was due to a viciousness in the magisterial liver or a crack in the magisterial head is for the medical faculty to determine. In the circumstances, it is an abominable disservice to British justice in either case.

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***Eau de Vie.***

It is comforting to have official reassurances about the London water supply. For some few days the water has smelled like the back streets of Bagdad, and tasted like stale beer. Householders having called in the police for suggestions, that enlightened body at once recommended that the water should be boiled. On this the aquapura officials intimated almost in so many words that the police knew a lot more about whisky than they knew about water; that there need be no anxiety about the smell and taste, that these phenomena were due to the presence of algæ—minute organisms which always came out after the rain and caused a disturbance—that they appeared two years ago in large numbers without hurting anybody, and that they had claims to be regarded as innocent neutrals. We trust, therefore, that this will find everybody in good heath, as it leaves us at present. All the same, we are boiling those algæ.

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**The Dairyman's Delight.**

Notwithstanding the impudent milk ramp of the Metropolitan Dairymen's Society, the Hammersmith milkmen were at first slow to join the conspiracy. Now they have done so, one of the reasons springing from the brilliant brain of a Mr. A. J. Davison being that "utensils were increasing in price." On the other hand, he did not point out to the meeting of the local association that the price of haircutting is as of yore. We repeat that there is no adequate reason for an increase in the price of milk, that the increase is a carefully engineered plot, and that the less milk the public drink the sooner will the price come down.

**Coal and the Collier.**

There is such a lot of mishandling of the truth in the coal trade at present that it is difficult to judge the circular issued "To Coal-Getters and Trimmers" by the management of the Wharncliffe Silkstone Collieries. "There is, however, no doubt," says the management, "that the full output possible is not being produced by those who have remained at home. Colliers are not producing as much coal as they could (by, perhaps, say, 15 per cent.) either by not working full time, or by not sending out as much coal as they might when at work." Not being down in the depths we do not know, and not knowing we cannot say. All we do know is that, with coal at 2s. 2d. per hundredweight to the poor in some parts of London, somebody evidently intends to retire from business at the end of the war; if it is not the collier, it is the coalmaster; if not the coalmaster, the railway director; if not the railway director, the coal merchant; and if not the coal merchant, the vociferator with the coal cart. The Wharncliffe colliers are certainly very angry at the imputations made against the muscles of their brawny arms. And we do not mind telling the management that some of them, communicating with our office, are allowing verbal expressions of the same from their tongues unbridled slip.

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**Encouraging the Press.**

In a laudable endeavour to educate the public in the difference in design of hostile and friendly aircraft, in order that steps may be taken to welcome the friendly and speed the hostile visitor, there has recently been exhibited outside police stations and other public buildings a placard "printed under the authority of his Majesty's Stationery Office," bearing silhouettes of the various types. Desirous of assisting in the good work of disseminating the information, a newspaper sought permission to reproduce the diagram—to be informed that the sheet was copyright, and that, for permission to publish, it would be necessary to pay a firm of printers a fee of a guinea! We next expect to hear that, when the police desire the portrait of a missing or "wanted" man to be circulated in the Press, a charge will be made by somebody for the right to reproduce the counterfeit presentment.

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**Pay, Pay, Pay!**

We would again ask the Army Council to investigate the method in which tens of thousands of our Tommies are being paid. There is tremendous discontent among the men. Putting aside the trick of telling the boys that they will get more than they subsequently find they are entitled to, there are many units where the men get full pay one week, three-quarters of their money the next, half the next, and possibly the whole week's pay the following week—but no arrears. The soldiers—remembering what they have read of past scandals—think that somebody is robbing them, but they are afraid to write to the War Office, because a complaint sent there means the guard-room. Thousands of desertions are directly traceable to this condition of affairs.

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**Camp Damages.**

We should like to know by what authority Lieut.-Col. R. S. Chichester, Commanding the 14th (S) Battalion Royal Irish Rifles, issued an Order on January 25th that all men of the battalion are to be charged one shilling camp damages for the month of January, and sixpence every subsequent month until further notice. Surely barrack and camp damage charges were abolished years ago.

**"Bullets" offers more prizes than any other competition.**

**Are Co-operators Christians?**

We did not know that the Co-operative movement was synonymous with atheism. A gentleman, however, writing to the *Leicester Mail*, points out that the establishment of a Co-operative Society has frequently had the effect of ruining small tradesmen in the vicinity, and a system which has such an effect is not, he contends, in accord with the true Christian spirit. He asks members of churches and chapels "to pause before they counsel their fellow worshippers to raise cash by means of dealing with Co-operative Societies, w'ich is not true co-operation at all, but commercial hypocrisy." We would not be so uncharitable as to suggest that the writer is himself a private trader, but in case he should happen to think the private trader is a gentle, Christian, philanthropic person, we should like him to know that for each shop opened by a certain large retail trust in England, it is estimated that three small private traders go bankrupt, while the multiple-shop companies are fast destroying the small man.

**Our Civil Service.**

Here is a little incident for which a reader vouches: In his early days he had been a wrangler, and for many years had browsed quietly as a very highly-salaried official in some little backwater of the service. He was large and fat, with a high, squeaky voice, and a gentle, soft manner. When the war broke out, there was an urgent need for helpers of every kind, and he had been lent out to some other department, working at high pressure, to render what assistance he could. There was no time to grade him according to his rank; in the rush of work it was everybody working and helping where most needed. As it happened, he had to assist and work with a number of temporary broken-down clerks, to whom this job—with its 25s. a week—came as a godsend, and the other day one of these temporary men was overheard to say to his companion: "I say, it's a waste of money. *I shouldn't wonder if that bloke gets as much as we do.*"

**Beverley's "Bad Boy" Gone Home.**

Here is a letter from Beverley:—"Dear JOHN BULL—You will recollect addressing a Candid Epistle to Edward Lyle, Beverley's 'Bad Boy.' I remember it, and was much touched by it. Well, the poor little chap has now gone to a Home where he will be looked after better than in Beverley. His little dead body was brought to Beverley (last Monday, I believe) from somewhere. I wonder whether our Magistrate's words, 'Give him six strokes of the birch,' will come back to him now. 'Super' Moore was to 'see it done.' Poor little chappie! His troubles are all over now, and all his 'badness' is forgiven. I felt you would like to know the end of our Bad Boy, who, as you said, never had a chance. He used to come to my doors and most of my neighbours' doors begging for all his food." How good a thing is it to hope that "There's a Home for little children above the bright blue sky"!

**Official: Latest.**

Delicious is the correspondence, printed by the *Subpostmaster*, which has passed between a sub-postmaster and the postmaster of a district not stated. "The Postmaster:" (it begins) "I regret to report that Miss ———, the ——— deliverer, has been called away to nurse her sister. Her mother, the only person available, is filling the breach, which I hope may be for about a fortnight only, and will begin the duty to-morrow; a declaration has been signed.——Sub-Postmaster." This was the reply: "Mr. ———: It is presumed that the substitute is over 16 years of age. but please say.——For Postmaster." Nothing like making sure of the documentary evidence.

**Peabody's Poor.**

It seems that the tenants of Peabody Buildings in Herbrand Street, W.C., are as badly off as those of Peabody Buildings, Blackfriars. A receipt before us shows rent 5s. 6d. and rates 1s. 3d., a total of 6s. 9d., while 1s. 6d. for a special rate collection—whatever that is—brings the payment made in that week to the Superintendent under the late George Peabody's philanthropic Trust to 8s. 3d.; and if the shade of the good man ever walks the night and passes that way, it will find tenants (who "do up" their own premises) groping their way upstairs at 10 o'clock at night in the dark—while if it takes a walk during the day it will notice nice trees planted in front of the buildings to make the place look pretty. "It is a great pity," exclaims one of the tenants who has read our previous comments, "some influential person does not look into the matter and see who is taking all this money, which we sadly want for bread for our children in this terrible war time." Have the Trustees *ever* thought of reducing the rents?

**"Who Mentioned Copper?"**

A Stockholm reader sends us a copy of the *Aftonbladet*, and this is an advertisement, in heavy black type, from its columns: "Köppar for Gjutning köpes"—but perhaps we had better translate: "Copper for Castings (or Foundry), 10—100 tons Copper. Quality of highest percentage, wanted to purchase. Period delivery. Price should be given C.I.F. Lubeck or Stettin, inclusive of sea and war risks. Payment immediately through Stockholmsbank after arrival of cargo in German port. Telegraphic reply requested to Ballas, Taborstrasse 36, Vienna, Austria." Which is evidently one of the ways in which the Germans do the trick. We gather from our correspondent that Swedish sentiment is far from being pro-British. "Why," he says, "even at one of the most popular cafés the orchestra recently opened with 'Hurrah, the Kaiser comes.'" We wonder what that orchestra will open with when he goes?

**Wages and Washtub.**

According to the reporter of the last meeting of the Limavady Board of Guardians (Limavady being in Erin's green isle), "an application for an increase of salary was received from the laundress, who stated that owing to the increased cost of living her weekly wage of 10s. was inadequate to support herself and her seven children." In these circumstances, one would have supposed that the Limavady Guardians would have at once increased the lady's wage by the one shilling suggested, but "on the recommendation of Mr. Lecke, the consideration of the application was adjourned for a week." The good news has not reached us, but by this time it is possible that the Guardians, having ascertained that the local treasury will stand the strain, have granted the increase. If not, there is only one thing for it. The lady and her seven will have to reduce their living expenses by dietetic experiments with nuts.

**Maidservants in Canada.**

For the time being, we have more vital things on hand than the Canadian Emigration Lie; and, indeed, we should like to forget it altogether. But an English girl in Windsor, Ontario, writes "just a line to show you in Canadian papers how much an English girl is wanted out here." The newspaper she encloses is the local *Evening Record*, with this advertisement marked: "Wanted—Competent Maid. Call evenings. No English need apply. Mrs., &c." Unfortunately, Mrs. What'shername is not exceptional. There are a great many Canadian people, masters as well as mistresses, who prefer their servants foreign.

**Another Great Free Football Contest—£1,500 for a correct Forecast. See page 31.**

# THE END IN SIGHT.

## THE BLUFF OF THE BLOCKADE—A COUNSEL OF DESPAIR.

The 18th of February has come and gone, and there is no material change in the situation. We say "no material change" advisedly, for there is undoubtedly a sentimental one. America is less disposed to listen to the voice of the German charmer—*and Italy is getting ready.* In other words, we are at the beginning of the end. It is still a considerable way to Tipperary, but we are more than half-way there; and the second half of the journey will be quicker and easier. The patience of Joffre, which compares favourably with that of Job himself; the calm, cool calculation of Kitchener and French; the pressure of the British navy, standing sentinel over the trade and commerce, and the food supply of the enemy; and, above all, the merciless might of British credit—are doing their work; and, to repeat what we said at the Albert Hall, the talons of the lion are in the neck of the vulture, and we can already hear the rattle in its foul black throat. The German Empire is rushing to its fall; the colossus of Europe, bywhom the peace and civilisation of the world has so long been challenged, is in its death-trance, and the earth will soon cease to groan beneath the tyranny of a military despotism by which it has been overshadowed for the past generation. As the gladsome spring follows in the wake of winter, bedecking the world with splendour, so will peace, glad and glorious, come to the world to heal the cruel wounds of war. Never since the birth of time has the downfall of an empire been hailed with such universal joy; for the ruin of the Kaiser's power will spell freedom to mankind from the accursed burden of armaments by land and sea; the yoke of taxation, which has bowed the necks of all nations and crushed the people for forty long years, will be lifted; commerce will open and expand, trade will flourish, art, literature, science and religion (in its noblest sense) will take a new lease of life, and the way will be paved towards that higher civilisation which has been the dream of poets and prophets since the morning stars first sang together.

But this is not the day for dreaming; it is our lot to look at the path directly in front of us, rather than into the hazy distances that lie far ahead; and perhaps it is because of a lifelong habit of close observation and immediate analysis that we feel ourselves competent to judge the present situation with a clearer view than most of our contemporaries. JOHN BULL'S world has a wide horizon; we never pander to the mob to catch the mood of the moment and reap a temporary gain; we endeavour to lead, not to follow, thought, whether in peace or war—to lead honestly, according to our lights; and because we feel in our bones that the end for Germany is not far off, we say so, and bid our countrymen and our Allies take heart of grace. That there will be a cyclonic clash of arms before the end, no one who has studied this stupendous struggle, step by step, inch by inch, as we have done, can for a moment doubt; just as the darkest hour precedes the dawn, so will the fiercest and most bloody struggle come before the world is finally free. *But when it comes, we shall be ready.*

### THE BLUFF OF THE BLOCKADE.

Thus write we on the morrow of the Great Threat of the Big Blockade. Truth to tell, it always left us quite cold. As a matter of solid fact, the announcement was not necessary. Germany had, prior to that proclamation, dipped her hands to the wrists in piracy; murder had been done on the waters of the North Sea by men wearing the German naval uniform and bearing the Kaiser's commission. Innocent sailormen, following their peaceful avocation, had been done to death. Ships of all kinds and conditions other than war vessels or blockade runners, had been ruthlessly attacked; and this latest manifesto was merely a prelude to a particularly clumsy piece of window-dressing designed to dazzle the eyes of the United States of America. Clumsy as the dressing was, however, a large number of the papers swallowed it with an avidity that must have made the conspirators in Berlin grin with unaffected delight. First came the "Note to Neutral Powers," declaring Germany's fixed intention to sink all merchantmen found steering towards Great Britain; then followed the explanation and the excuse; and it was this part of the Berlin campaign that the pressmen of the metropolis devoured with such innocent avidity, playing into the Kaiser's hands as if they loved him and all his works. The excuse for murder and piracy is that Germany is now denuded of food; that her civilian population is on the brink of starvation—therefore she is justified in the damnable work which she had set herself to do. And immediately the Kaiser's wirepullers made this announcement, the British Press, almost without exception, accepted it as a fact, and raised the shout "Germany is beaten; Germany is starved out!" They did not stop to consider that if Germany had really been on the verge of famine, the Kaiser and his councillors would have been the last men to voice the fact. She was not, and she is not—at present—starving; that specious plea was only raised to cloak her crimes and give them in the courts of the world a justification on the score of self-defence. How well it will read—poor despairing German mothers rending municipal officers limb from limb in the fury of despair caused by the hunger agony of curly-haired little Fritz and blue-eyed Gretchen—and all through the devilish machinations of the brutal English, who have shut off food supplies from women and babes whilst big Hans and sturdy Karl were away in the fighting line battling for the Fatherland!

### THE KAISER'S DISILLUSIONS.

*It is the beginning of the end.* There is enough food in Germany to last out a few months longer, but ammunition is running short; the best of the army is already killed or maimed; money is tight; the crews of the fleet are restless and almost mutinous; the civilian population is becoming impatient;

Austria and Hungary have had nearly enough; neither America nor Italy can be wooed; the mills of God are grinding—grinding, slowly, as always, but grinding exceeding small. The mad monarch has been disillusioned. With no Bismarck and no Moltke to guide him, the whole war so far has been a series of disillusions. The first came at Liége, where his Imperial grave was dug—a great fact which will live in history until the world is rolled up like a scroll. Germany meant to spring at the throat of France, and Belgium checked the plan and turned what would have been a tidal wave of victory into a sullen onslaught—a dreadful and prolonged onslaught of terrific power, it is true, but lacking, after Liége, the momentum that makes for irresistibility. Then came the next factor—a factor never taken into account by the strategists of Berlin; the appearance of a real British military force in the area of war. The arrival of a "contemptible little army" of British make and quality had been thought of and brushed aside by the Junkers as something too insignificant to be worth serious consideration. But they did not—they could not—foresee that Britain would hurl into the breach a little handful of heroic men destined to form the nucleus of an Army as dauntless and invincible as any that Sparta threw into the path of the colossal Roman Empire in the youth of its power and pride. The under-estimation of Belgium's heroism was Germany's first crucial blunder; the utter failure to understand or appreciate the quality and character of the British soldier was the second, and was an error so vast and far-reaching that it is fast turning the check in front of Liége into irretrievable disaster for the whole campaign. These two gigantic mistakes ruptured the main arteries of the long-planned and carefully prepared attack upon the liberties of mankind, and the rights of humanity. The result was fury and hate. The little force that crossed the Channel to help Belgium was at once made the target of the German arms. Legions of men—horse, foot and guns—poured down in an irresistible flood on our dauntless few at Mons, and the weight of numbers swept them backwards towards Paris. It was only by a miracle that any of them escaped from that human maelstrom. For a hundred kilometres, from Mons to Compiègne, the invaders had things their own way. Though the world never produced better soldiers than ours, they were only human, and for a time the German Juggernaut rolled onward, although over every inch of that terrible stretch of country our "nucleus" of an army gave them lead and steel of which the old men will talk in time to come. And in those terrible ten days it made good what the Belgians had begun at Liége. It saved Paris and gave the French time to rally all their energies.

### An Early Warning.

Even at that stage, an early end to the war and the certain downfall of the Kaiser's empire was written clearly on the wall. Belgium and Britain had broken the tiger's back; he might fight, but he could spring no more. The battle of the Marne sent the invaders reeling back into Von Kluck's entrenchments. The fearful struggles of the French on the Meuse, when they encountered every rush of the foe with the bayonet, added yet another nail to the German coffin. Some day a historian worthy of the Homeric task will write the doings of the French soldiers at that critical period, and another chapter will be added to the long list of the glories of France. Never did men fight better for their homeland than our French allies fought then, and they will well deserve the freedom that is now dawning. Not only did they hold the enemy at bay, but they materially helped to beat out of the German legions the long and carefully engrained idea of their invincibility, the loss of which is at this hour making for peace. Meanwhile, the Russians and Serbians were not idle. Austria was being humbled, Prussia invaded, and at this moment Austria is a negligible factor in the conflict; she has lost both her spirit and her prestige. To all intents and purposes she is ruined, in both an economical and a military sense; and is now more of a drag than a help, and it cannot be long ere her always unstable empire falls to pieces.

Turkey was a corpse galvanised into a semblance of life before she joined in; she was a mummy amongst the nations, leprous with her own uncleanness and not improved by Teutonic contact; and it cannot be long, too, before she, like Austria-Hungary, must crumble to pieces, and leave Germany naked to the Allies on yet another side. Meanwhile, Britain is steadily training a great army, and pouring her troops on to the Continent to block the way to Calais and to be ready for the counter-stroke when the hour which is so near shall strike. Already we have such an army in the field as the world did not think us capable of raising and equipping; we have done it in time of war, and have not felt the strain; we have dislocated no businesses, stopped no factories; commerce, agriculture, manufactures have gone on as usual; a stranger within our gates would scarcely know we were at war. Our quiet, resistless strength is doing as much to overawe our enemy as the armies in the field. Germany, in spite of the bluster from Berlin, sees with a naked eye that we can never be beaten, and that knowledge is crushing her to her knees. Already the most powerful leaders amongst her Socialists are demanding peace whilst there is yet a chance of saving a shred of Teuton prestige. Before long, the full truth concerning the situation will come home to the masses of this most misguided people, and they will rend the Fatherland asunder and bring the mad Kaiser to either his senses or his grave.

Then, as we have said, the silent but deadly pressure of our fleet is another factor of limitless importance in the programme. Our ships have Germany's commerce throttled on every highway and ocean avenue; and whilst our workmen are busy—most of them making double time—the enemy's multitudes are idle. We can sell what we manufacture, and carry on the war with what we earn from day to day. the enemy can neither get the raw material to keep her factory hands in employment, nor sell what goods are already made. Her people *must* starve, and whilst we refill our purses week by week, hers must become empty. However well her soldiers in the field may yet fight, ours will fight better—*because they want to fight.* Yes, we have them checked everywhere, with lead and steel—and with gold.

Yes, the end *is* in sight.

# THE CRY OF THE SOUL.

## A REPLY TO THE "FREETHINKER."

In our Christmas issue we registered this belief in terms which we see no reason to revise :—

> This is no time for polemics of any sort—least of all for theological controversy—but we remain convinced that this giant upheaval of civilisation was pre-ordained by that supreme Power which in gentler mood decreed the birth of the Christ idea, planting a Cross in the heart of the world's history. This at any rate is the only explanation which at once illumines the trend of human affairs and satisfies the deepest aspirations of the soul.

These words have provoked a good deal of criticism, mostly good natured, but plentifully seasoned with barbed humour. We have been urged to "drop the pious lay" at which it is said we have "run the Kaiser close." In a recent issue of the *Freethinker*, the virile organ of the British Secular Society—the president of which, Mr. G. W. Foote, could, like the late Mr. Bradlaugh, have been *anything* in public life if he had chosen a less unfashionable sphere for his great gifts—we are taken to task in respect of the article in our issue of November 28th last, under the title of "Wanted, a New Religion."

"How many more religions?" asks the writer, Mr. Arthur B. Moss. We should be better able to answer the question were we told how many there are at present—and what is meant by the word "religion." We are obliged to add that last stipulation, because we notice that our distinguished critic is somewhat loose in his terminology—not, apparently, appreciating the distinction between religion and *creed*, and between faith and *dogma*. He forgets the dictum of the founder of the Secular school, our own esteemed relative George Jacob Holyoake—"Keep different things distinct." How lamentably our friend falls into this error is shown by almost every question he addresses to us. When we say "we have never scoffed at religion," for instance, we are asked whether we mean that we do not "scoff at the poor, ignorant savage who, when he sees the lightning flash from the clouds and hears the thunders rolling in the heavens, goes down on his knees and appeals to the unknown spirits or gods behind phenomena to shield him from danger." No, we do not. We think it a good thing that the "poor ignorant savage" should be profoundly impressed with the solemn grandeur of the great forces of Nature, and should believe—*as almost every scientist in the world does*—that behind them all is the same great Controlling Power. And if the "poor ignorant savage" can bring himself to believe that his personal comfort and welfare are of sufficient moment in the great Scheme of Things to warrant a special dispensation, in his favour, of that Power—well, let him believe it. It comforts him; it keeps him out of mischief—and it does nobody any harm. But then we are asked whether we equally respect "the civilised and cultured man who knows the scientific explanation of these phenomena, but who nevertheless blindly worships the unknown forces of nature as God, and makes the ignorance of these unknown forces the basis of his religion." So, most learned Moss, even to "the civilised and cultured man" who knows all about "the scientific explanation" of thunder and lightning, there are such things as "unknown forces of Nature"? Well, why *not* call them God? Can Mr. Moss, or any other pundit, suggest a better name? We confess we cannot; and that brings us very near again, to our first question—how many *religions* are there in the world? We need not remind Mr. Moss of those words of Col. Ingersoll about the dead-heat in knowledge of the mysteries between the greatest scholar and the chimpanzee; and perhaps we may venture to refer him to our own speech when we had the privilege of presiding at one of the Bradlaugh Fellowship dinners, and to the passages in which we expressed our view that, despite all our civilisation and science and philosophy, we stand in relation to the mysteries of the universe just where our oldest forefathers stood. So do not let us poke fun at the savage.

We have already, by anticipation, answered the questions addressed to us in regard to our opinion that "the world is not yet old enough to run alone, and deprived of Faith and Hope it would be a sorry place to live in"—for each of them has reference to some item of creed or dogma; and if these by-products of religion have led to the "masses being exploited by the priest and parson," the fact is easily explained, without reference to the fundamental verities of life. Dogma and Creed are to religion what Party is to politics—and the existence of professional guides is as natural a thing as it is in the case of tourists wishing to explore the hidden paths and passes of the Alps.

Then when we say that "we have never scoffed at prayer—prayer of reverential, unselfish *effort* to establish communion with God, and all that God stands for in the mind and soul of man," we are asked whether we believe in the "efficacy" of it. That is why we have italicised the word "effort." Just read the sentence again, Mr. Moss. And what, please, do you mean by "efficacy"? We know that the day after a specially-ordained prayer for peace, war was declared by nearly all the principal nations of Europe—and all that sort of thing. As a sporting friend of ours puts it—"On book form, Prayer is no good"; but who shall judge its "efficacy" in the case of the bereaved mother, the widowed wife—aye, and the dying soldier in the trenches? Think you that these poor humans could bear their cross were they deprived of the comfort, the faith and the hope of their prayers? No, Mr. Moss—perhaps you have not sat, as we have done, at the bedside of a mortally-wounded young husband and father, and seen the light in his eyes as the kindly priest—yes, there *are* kindly priests—has prayed with him and spoken to him of the life to come, when he and those he loved will meet. Think you that the Army would be better without such faith—never mind its dogma or its creed?

### THE GOSPEL OF NEGATION.

The fact is, dear Mr. Moss, Secularism has had its day. It has done great work; and in the distant future, when historians take the true perspective of the last years of the nineteenth century, Holyoake, Bradlaugh and Foote will be placed high on the roll of those who helped to remove the scales of ignorance and blind superstition from the eyes of mankind.

But Religion is bigger than the Bible. Faith is grander than Christianity. Truth is wider than any system of theology. The believer in "God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth," may be nearer the solution of life's stupendous riddle than the Materialist who, with his yard-tape of reason, seeks to compass the Heavens in a syllogism and to plumb the Infinite with a scientific formula. Each man's faith is his own, born of his experience, compounded of his deepest emotions. It is a thing which cannot be argued about—and is best, perhaps, not talked about. We simply believe *what* we believe; we can never *know*.

## "COAL, CO—O—AL——GEE-UP!"

### GRAVE CLASH BETWEEN OFFICIAL STATEMENTS AND FACTS.

Whoever it was persuaded Mr. Asquith that coal had gone up in price only 15 per cent. since the war, must be an exclusive consumer of coke. He did not know much about coal, anyway. Even Mrs. Asquith, who has the reputation of being a good housekeeper, could probably have told him a different story; but, whether she could or not, there is the undoubted fact that the flagrant price of coal is an organised imposition put upon a defenceless British public. What are we told? A colliery owner said in the House of Commons the other night that "the average price obtained by coalowners now was less than in February, 1914"; a collier writes to us that he receives 3s. 1d. a ton for getting the coal, and that as soon as it reaches the pit-bank the coal owner receives (he is speaking under date February 14th, and of his particular district) 18s. a ton; a coal merchant will tell you he is making nothing out of the present increase in prices; a street coalman complains that the marking-up of the commodity is of no advantage to him—while the bed-rock facts are that the rise in the price of household coal at the pit-heads of Yorkshire and the Midlands has been from 70 to 100 per cent., at a time when the increase in the railway charges to London varied from 6d. to 9d. a ton only; that coal is now hawked through the streets of London at 2s. a hundredweight, and that, as we write these lines on the morning following the debate in the House of Commons, the Tyne has jumped up its coal prices to a figure which amounts to nothing less than public plunder. "Best Blyth steams," says the report, "are being quoted at half-a-crown a ton more than on Tuesday, whilst most other descriptions of Northumberland fuel were markedly dearer; coal freights were also quoted at hitherto unparalleled heights, London being mentioned at 13s. 6d." It is idle for the Government to look complacently over the end of its nose and pretend that the situation is really but slightly above normal and only what—especially the poorer classes—might have expected as a result of the War. What Sir A. Markham told the Government to its face is indisputable. There is no justification at all for present prices if there is no justification in plunder. "An increase of 1s. 6d. or 2s. a ton would have amply repaid the extra cost of production."

THE "WORKERS'" WASTE OF WIND.

As invariably happens when the Labour Party are required to find a practical solution of matters they are in a special position to understand, their contributions to the House of Commons debate were mere wind and waste. Their demand for a fixation of prices of commodities, the supply of which the Government cannot control, was a mere blather of phrases and a riot of perverted economics. It looks as if this is what they will have to do to put an end to the present scandalous exploitation of the public for private profit. It is not only the poor who are the victims. Thousands of families who do not usually come under the designation of the "working classes," families where the income is fixed and the standard of necessary "appearances" is relatively high, are feeling the strain of this widespread coal ramp. It has taken the Government a long time to get as far along the road of practical means for dealing with it as an "Inquiry." The Inquiry might, and should, have been begun and ended weeks ago, certainly before Mr. Asquith rose in the House to dismiss the whole subject of coal prices with an airy complacency, based on astonishing misinformation as to the real facts. Notwithstanding the reduction of labour in the pits, there is an ample supply of coal in the country and, with proper organisation, adequate means of transit and distribution. No doubt the Government have other very important jobs on hand, and do not wish to take on a new one if they can by any means persuade themselves and other people that all things are working together for good—not excepting coal at 2s. a hundredweight. When once they take this black diamond industry in hand, however, they will find the job is not quite as difficult or quite as big as they seem disposed to regard it. Let them find out where the plunder is going, what conditions are facilitating the machinations of the plunderers, and "act according"—then coal will fall to its proper price.

## CLEARING THE AIR.

### IRISH LOYALTY AND GERMAN TRICKERY.

Since "he who pays the piper calls the tune," it has generally been assumed that the policy of the Irish Nationalist Party owes much of its inspiration to Irish Americans whose sympathy has always taken a practical form. The Irish Leaders would, therefore, do well to dissociate themselves from the strongly pro-German position openly assumed by many of the American Irish. A special recruiting appeal signed by Mr. John Redmond and Mr. Devlin would add a battalion to the Irish Brigade and at the same time give the *coup de grâce* to lingering suspicions of Irish loyalty. In neutral countries such a declaration of patriotism would go far to nullify the effect of the German press campaign to which we trace the subjoined report from a San Francisco journal.

> Under the auspices of the Provisional Committee of the Irish National Volunteers a meeting was held last night in the Valencia Theatre to raise funds for the purpose of equipping Irish Volunteers in Ireland with modern implements of warfare. Among the speakers were Rev. Peter C. Yorke, Rev. Phillip O'Ryan, F. J. Kierce, and Theodore Purther. Hundreds of Germans and as many more Irish crowded the theatre. The sentiments expressed by the speakers and approved by the audience were that no Irishman should enlist against Germany, that Ireland should align with Germany in the present crisis, and particularly should Ireland lie in wait for an opportunity to put into action Daniel O'Connell's immortal words, "England's difficulty is Ireland's opportunity." All of the speakers were of the opinion that the present is the time for Ireland to seek absolute independence.

We might multiply such announcements from the more venal organs of the American press. Apart from a small and discredited minority the sentiments recorded find no support in Ireland. None the less, an official declaration of loyalty, unambiguously expressed, would be hailed with satisfaction throughout the Empire, and nowhere more than in the trenches at the Front, where thousands of brave Irishmen are gloriously maintaining the martial traditions of their race.

## HOCH! HOCH!! HOCH!!!

### A STRAW SHOWS HOW THE WIND BLOWS.

Signs are increasing that the Germans have had about enough, and that they would be glad to get out of the War in the same condition as they went in. The German censorship controls opinions as well as news; therefore, when it allows Herr Gustav Hoch, a member of the Reichstag, and a Social Democrat, to express himself in a Peace article in the *Neue Zeit*, there is a fair inference that the Kaiser's Government is, at any rate, not averse from such terms of peace as those he suggests. When further he states that the Socialists will originate in the Reichstag a discussion on these terms of peace, the inference is further strengthened—for the Herr von Bethmann-Hollweg would promptly gag a discussion not to his liking. What, then, are the terms Germany would be glad to accept if she could get them? Let the Herr Hoch speak for himself: "No conquests," says he; "no violation or subjection of any nation; free competition of all nations in foreign countries; an understanding for a peaceful solution of disputes between Governments and a systematic limitation of armaments. Such a peace corresponds so well to the interests of the majority of the nations that it should be immediately possible." And a very cheap peace for Germany it would be! It is a lot less than the country went to war for, and a lot less than it would stay in for if it had a chance of winning. On the other hand, it is just as well the Herr Hoch and the Herr Bethmann-Hollweg, and all the other Herrs of the Reichstag, should realise that this is not the peace we have a three-million army and a dominant navy for, nor the peace Belgium and Poland and France have suffered for; nothing in the slightest degree like it. The peace of Berlin will hurt a lot more than that; it will be a lot dearer, and there will be a lot more war before its chapter is written—wherefore to talk about it now is as an idle word upon the wind. There will be ample time for that conversation between the Spring chicken and the Christmas pudding.

**Big cheques waiting for the best "Bullets." See page 32.**

## A GENUINE GRIEVANCE.

### WANTED—BUSINESS LAND LAWS.

The relationship subsisting between "copyholders" and lords of manors must not be confused with the obligations between landlord and tenant, to which, in fact, it bears no more than a chance resemblance—copyhold tenure, save for its burdensome incidents, being indistinguishable from other forms of ownership. Through the survival of archaic laws, there are districts in which agricultural land can only be purchased subject to rent charges perpetually vested in the lord of the manor. Thus a Kentish reader informs us that, having acquired a farm in the Manor of Aldington, he was presented with a demand for £2 7s. 7d., said to be due from him in respect of his holding. Venturing to dispute the claim, he received from the Stewards of the Manor a lengthy explanation, forcibly illustrating the grievances of copyholders in general. The sum in question was said to be due in respect of "reliefs," "entry fees," "acquittances" and "quit rents," payable upon each transfer of the property, and in regard to each of these items the Stewards obligingly furnished a word or two of illuminating comment. The "entry fees," they explained, were their own "perquisites," some part of which "to meet the point and to avoid litigation" they would generously forego. The "reliefs," however, they were unable to relinquish, as they "belonged to the Lord"—of the Manor. Finally, the amount of the claim was whittled down to 19s. 7d., which our correspondent declined to pay. The dispute was ultimately referred to the County Court, where in the existing state of the law, the Stewards had no difficulty in obtaining judgment on behalf of the Lord of the Manor, with costs amounting to nearly double the sum claimed. Having paid "under protest," our correspondent somewhat bitterly reflects that he will get no sort of return for his money, and he strongly denounces these arbitrary exactions. We cordially sympathise with his views. When free to turn its attention to domestic affairs, the Legislature should order the immediate enfranchisement of copyhold lands upon equitable terms.

## TOUCHING FOR TANNERS.

### POTTER POOLEY'S PRETTY PLAN.

The People's Accident Legal Aid Society, of 190, Fleet Street, London, E.C., whereof one C. Potter Pooley signs himself as Secretary, is a concern which we have frequently criticised. One of its canvassers has lately been up to the old trick of his fraternity in the Wandsworth district. His *modus operandi* is to knock at the door, ask the name of the occupier, scribble rapidly in an official and authoritative way on a printed form of receipt, nd demand "Sixpence, please." In one case under our notice a lady, in the absence of her husband, was so thoroughly deceived by the manner of the troublesome tout that she meekly handed over the sixpence, believing him to be an emissary of the municipal authorities. Mr. C. Potter Pooley will probably disclaim the methods of his canvassers, and point to the enormous benefits the small sum of sixpence will purchase in his Society. Let us look at them. On the official receipt form it states that "This is to certify that ——, having paid the sum of 6d., is a member of the above Society and is entitled to the undermentioned benefits for one year from this date. 1. Free Legal Advice on all matters. 2. Legal assistance in cases of injury by accident, when in the opinion of the Society's Legal advisers the member has a just claim to compensation; 10 per cent. of the amount recovered being retained by the Society to cover expenses. 3. In matters other than accidents, legal assistance will be provided to members on very easy terms, and persons requiring such are advised to apply to the Society." We sniff a slight contradiction here. "*Free legal advice on all matters*" scarcely coincides with "legal assistance will be provided on *very easy terms*." But those points we do not wish to debate at the moment. It is the methods of the Society's canvassers we protest against. Bullying trembling women out of tanners is not a pretty game, and is surely beneath the dignity of an association that operates under so imposing a name as "The People's Accident Legal Aid Society."

## "SEARCHING" INQUIRIES.

### A FEW PERTINENT QUESTIONS FOR MR. PAGE-GASTON.

Several inquiries have reached us as to the *bona fides* of Mr. Edward Page-Gaston, F.R.G.S., of 134, Salisbury Square, Ludgate Circus, E.C.—the address being that of a firm of publishers, whose telephone number also he uses—and who, describing himself as an American, offers his services with a view to delivering to British prisoners in Germany letters and parcels from their friends in this country, and further solicits subscriptions for the benefit of the captives.

Mr. Gaston has issued a leaflet which purports to contain the reprint of an article from the *Times* of the 3rd December last on his mission. We have failed to trace the article in that issue of our contemporary.

We were the more anxious to discover the article as, upon statements appearing in it, we put to Mr. Gaston certain questions which in our view required answers in order to enable us to form an opinion as to his ability to give satisfaction to persons who were in need of an agency such as he offered. The information which we sought from him was to this effect:—

Who is associated with him in the enterprise?

When have any balance sheets been issued, showing the receipt and expenditure of his War Fund?

What authority has he obtained from the War Office enabling him to arrange an expedition to Germany?

What is the scale of charges for his work, and what is his own fee?

Is he prepared to supply a list of his clients in Great Britain who have expressed their satisfaction at the services rendered to them by his agency?

It was on the 13th of January that we addressed these questions to Mr. Gaston. On the following day we received a letter, bearing some undecipherable initials, stating that Mr. Gaston was then in Germany, and that on his return the matter would be placed before him. We wrote again on the 8th, and once more on the 12th of this month, reminding him that we were still without a reply, but he has given no signs of life, and we must conclude, therefore, either that he is still away from home, or that he refuses to give us the information asked for.

In the circumstances, it is impossible for us to recommend readers to engage Mr. Gaston, especially as the War Office has now notified that it has given no official authorisation to any agency to carry out searches for the missing

## STITCH, STITCH, STITCH!

### SEAMSTRESSES STARVE WHILE FOREIGNERS FATTEN.

We are making an effort to capture the German toy trade; but if the scale of wages before us is typical of the earnings of the workers in general, it is not likely that the income-tax will benefit. A doll-maker outside London works his hands from 8 a.m. till 7 p.m. for the royal sum of 8s. per week, less 3d. insurance money. The machinists who make the dolls' clothing are on piecework, and for 8d. they have to turn out a dozen dresses, a dozen petticoats, a dozen aprons, a dozen caps, and a dozen pairs of thingamebobs. Working hard, they manage to earn an average of a shilling a day. Of course, the Germans turned out the goods at the price by the employment of convict labour which would never be allowed in this country.

Here is another complaint concerning the treatment of the British worker. In the North of London is a sub-contractor in the soft-goods line. He runs his business not so much to increase his own banking account as to keep over a score of poor women and girls at their work making shirts and blouses. Many of the orders for the shirts come from the contractors to the Government—several of them alien enemies. Here are some of the prices—the most that can be paid in the circumstances:—Cutting out and stitching, 1s. per dozen; turning out silk blouses, the making of which requires the greatest skill, 2s. 9d. per dozen; and so on. The machinists have to supply their own cotton, and this reduces the pay received for the dozen shirts to 9½d. By the time the sub-contractor has got the materials, has had the goods made, and has sent them back by the carter, he is generally out of pocket. By giving the contracts direct to the sub-contractors, the Government could immensely help our own people.

**Don't forget to cut out the Pen Coupon on page ii. of cover.**

# "JOHN BULL'S" WEEKLY CINEMA.

BULL-DOGGEREL RHYMES BY "THE BOW-WOW."

The Kaiser, in his pirate guise,
Took pains the whole world to apprise
That on Feb. 18th would transpire
Manifestations of his ire.

But when the awful day came round,
That things were much the same 'twas found:
No doubt the Butcher's spirits sank
To find he'd drawn another blank.

O'Leary's fame will live for aye,
For what he did the other day,
When, with his good right hand, he slew
Eight Huns, and bagged a further two!

"If Winning Number's number's up,"
Thought Dewar, "then I've won the Cup!"
Which proves there's profit, and some fun,
In looking after Number One.

*The Times* is properly elate
To raise so much at such a rate;
'Tis good to find the times, though hard,
Do not the nation's gifts retard.

*Some* racing men it may appal
To find the stand a hospital,
But I, for one, shall feel perturbed
If our brave wounded are disturbed.

## A MANCHESTER MUDDLE.

### ANOMALOUS POSITION OF CHIEF CONSTABLE.

The war has brought about many surprises, and promises or threatens others. One of the most curious of those which have materialised so far, is in connection with Mr. Peacock, the Chief Constable of Manchester, who suddenly finds himself attached to the War Office, whilst retaining his post under the City Council. This, at any rate, seems to be the position in view of the ruling of the Lord Mayor of Manchester the other day, when at one of the meetings Councillor H. Ross Clyne proposed to ask some questions in connection with the internment and release of alien enemies. His worship ruled that no answers should be given. It was not at all a subject for the Council, he said; it was one in which the War Office issued instructions to the police which they had to carry out. "It is not a matter," he added, "that we can discuss here at all."

We suggest that if the question of the treatment of aliens be outside the purview of the City Council, it ought also to be outside that of its Chief Constable. The task of deciding off his own bat as to which alien shall or shall not be interned casts a burden upon Mr. Peacock which he should not be required to shoulder without instructions from, and direct responsibility to, his employers. He is paid a salary from the purses of the citizens to carry out instructions given to him by their representatives in the municipal chamber, and it is not right to jockey him into a postion where he may be called upon to act in defiance of the wishes and the interests of his principals.

## THE MAIMED.

The splendid sufferers, broken in the fight,
Back to the homeland came by stormy night—
Happy, and heedless of their maim and wound,
To be once more on this loved English ground.

Stern was the sight, and silence spoke the grief
Of those who saw; but pluck beyond belief
Shone from those heroes stricken in their prime,
The scanty salvage of a nameless crime.

Of their long agony they scorned to speak;
It was: "Why, I'll be right now in a week!
Out there, wounds healed not, we were wed to pain,
Now—Home, Sweet Home!—we'll soon be cured again!"

Thus said one man, a broken remnant now,
Yet still a victor with unconquered brow,
"Sorry? Of course! But satisfied, you see—
That's if my country's satisfied with me!"

Brave, smiling, gentle ones, who slowly come
Back from the stricken field to rest at home,
Take to your heart assurance trebly true—
God knows your folk are satisfied with you!

But, when we see your manhood wrecked and spent,
A debt remains with which we're not content;
There must be reck'ning yet for those to pay
Who did these things, who burn, and maim, and slay!

RICHARD MORTON.

**Ideal! The "John Bull" Fountain Pen. Send for it now.**